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Belvedere General Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Belvedere General Plan provides the City with an integrated guide to decision making, now and for the future. It seek to deal with matters important to the City as it approaches full development, at levels appropriate to community concerns.

The plan recognizes that Belvedere is part of the Tiburon Peninsula, Richardson Bay communities, and Marin County. It identifies areas where cooperation and participation can assist the City in achieving its own objectives.

Major policy recommendations from the 1970 "Parks and Recreation Long Range Development Plan," the 1972 "Report of the Committee on Open Space," and the 1971 "Planning Study" have been incorporated where they are relevant to current needs. New areas of concern mandated by state law, such as community safety and noise, have been explored, evaluated and recommendations included.

LAND USE

Belvedere is a community embracing two island promontories at the southwestern tip of the Tiburon Peninsula, and a lagoon-landfill area linking the islands to the mainland. From the islands, there are sweeping marine views to the surrounding Bay area, and within the landfilled area, views and direct access to the more intimate lagoon. Fine weather complements community assets -- since among the marine micro-climates of the Bay area, the weather generally has more sun and less fog than that of its neighbors. With these environmental qualities, Belvedere has looked inviting to Bay Area residents for over 80 years, and has become one of the most desirable and attractive residential communities in the Bay Area.

Many of the permanent early Belvedere homes -- from around the time of the turn of the century -- were built above Belvedere Cove for summer and leisure use. Some early residents anchored arks or houseboats in Belvedere Cove during the summer, and wintered in the sheltered lagoon behind Beach Road. Subsequent development next occurred in the area about Laurel Avenue, followed by Corinthian Island and the western side of the island. In the 1950's and '60's, the Lagoon area, San Rafael Avenue, North Point, and the West shore were built, followed by apartments along Beach Road. Current development consists of construction of individual residences on the island's scattered vacant lots, of which only about 30 remain.

In 1975, with a population of 2,650 and 985 dwelling units, Belvedere is a city nearing building capacity of the land. The city's growth curve is typical of a community approaching full development: 24% of the units were built during the 50-year period prior to 1940; growth peaked in the post-World War II period during the 1950's when almost half the city's houses were built, at an average of 45 units per year; growth dropped to 20 units per year in the 1960's, and to 5 per year in the early '70's.

The land use pattern is well established and almost completely resolved. Exhibit 1 presents the profile of land use in Belvedere as of 1975.

Belvedere is clearly predominantly residential rather than a "balanced" community, with well over 90% of its land area either in residential use, or zoned residential. Nearly all employment and most residential service needs are met outside Belvedere.

Land Use 1



0 800'

Single Family



Duplex



Apartment



Parks, Open Space



Public/
Semi-Public



Utilities



Commercial



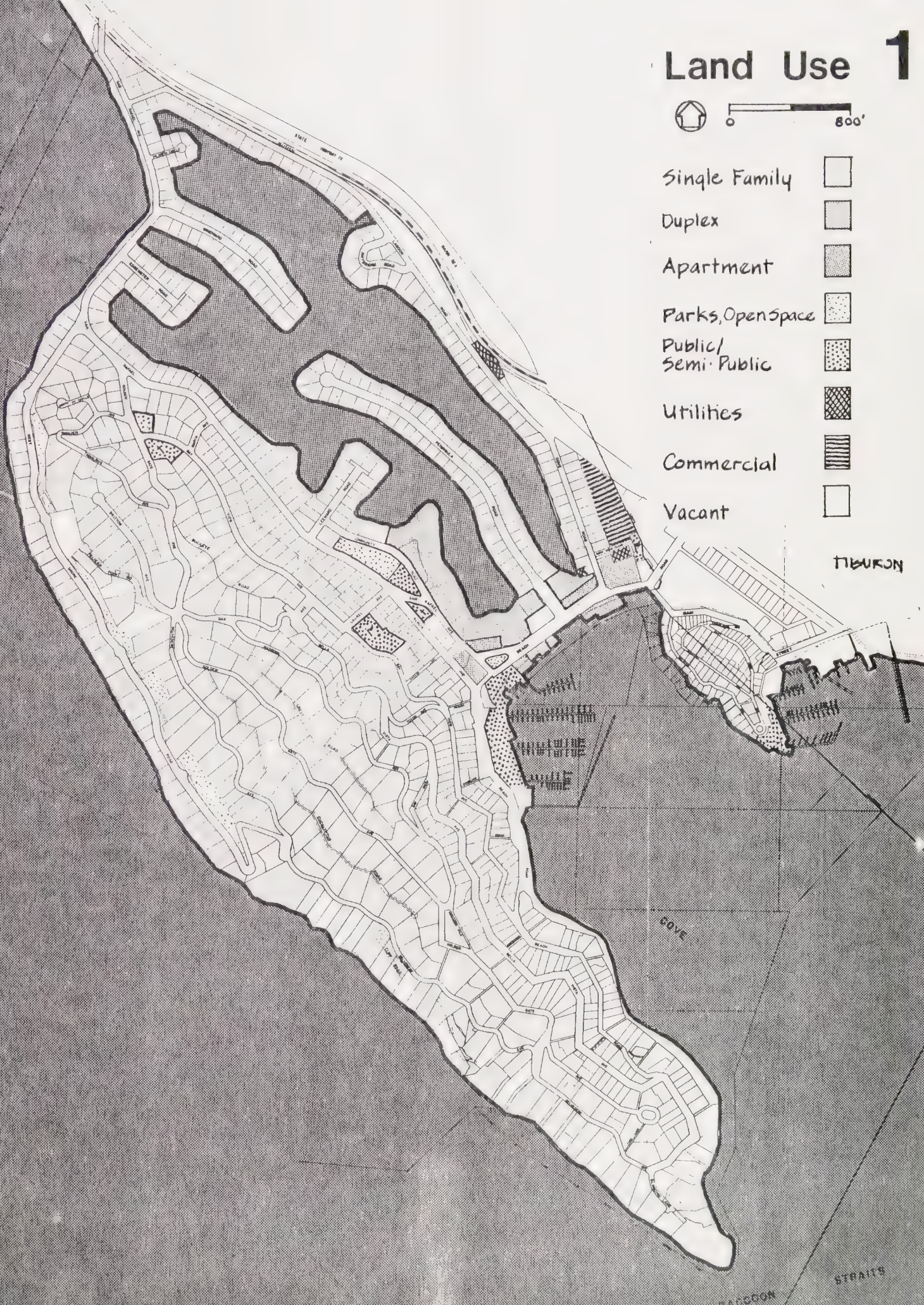
Vacant



NEURON

COVE

STRAITS



Most heads of households take the bus, ferry, or a car to San Francisco jobs. The employment base within the community is very small -- a few offices, the yacht club, and occasional construction activities supply most intown jobs.

Commercial uses within the city consist of the portion of the Boardwalk shopping area which lies within the city boundary; therefore, most neighborhood, community shopping, and service needs are met in the other shopping areas of the Tiburon Peninsula -- in Tiburon, the Cove, or at Strawberry.

Most of the recreation uses are related to San Francisco Bay. There are two major yacht clubs and the Belvedere Sailing Society. For parks, the city has the main park adjacent to the city hall (which has a small active play space, and children's play facilities), undeveloped Lagoon Road park, and Cove Beach. Private open space -- the large yards adjacent to most houses -- takes care of most small scale play and open space needs; and, two private recreation clubs in Tiburon, with swimming pools, tennis courts and clubhouse facilities, are used by many Belvedere residents for active play. Other active and passive play needs, such as those frequently met in communities by playgrounds, playfields, neighborhood or community parks ranging in size from three to ten acres, must be filled outside the city. Opportunities for expansion of recreation facilities in Belvedere are few. Undeveloped Lagoon Rd. Park is one; the Belvedere School site should also be considered if school use is phased out.

Among the city's community facilities, there are two churches, a city hall, and a corporation yard. The city owns its own sewerage system and contracts out maintenance and waste disposal. Water is supplied by the Marin County Water District. Both systems are capable of handling the expected small amount of additional growth.

There is one elementary school -- Belvedere School -- in the city. It houses two elementary grades of the Reed School District. A well designed, useful facility, the school district indicates it will be maintained as long as there are sufficient children in Belvedere who can walk to the school. Slightly more than half the school population is now being bussed in. Other school facilities in the city include a kindergarten at St. Stephen's church on Bayview and a nursery school on Cove Place.

Issues

By 1970, increasing land values and taxes were having an adverse impact on development in Belvedere. Buildings

disproportionate to lot size were being built; some large lots were being subdivided and sold off to defray high taxes and provide income; and the lack of density regulations in the multi-family zone were raising other fears of unharmonious development. Aware that existing regulations were inadequate to meet the then current pressures, in 1971 Belvedere undertook a planning study with Livingston-Blaney to address the city's land use concerns. The resulting report, "The Belvedere Planning Study," documented the issues raised, made policy recommendations and suggested means for implementation. Since the study was completed, the city has implemented most of the recommendations through a major revision of the zoning ordinance, completed in 1973. Exhibit 2 shows current zoning. No substantive land issues remain.

Policies

The following represents a summary of the major policy decisions adopted and implementation actions taken by the city following recommendations made in the "Planning Study."

1. Significant new development is discouraged. Building is permitted only on lots of legal size for the residential zone in which they lie; the privilege of building on lots of substandard size is described in the zoning ordinance; and controls are instituted governing the splitting off of substandard lots which are part of presently developed parcels.

2. Residential densities are controlled to preserve the character of Belvedere. The two single family zones, R-15 requiring 15,000 sq. ft. per unit, and R-1, requiring 7,500 sq. ft. per unit, were retained, and density regulations adopted for the multi-family zones.

3. New construction is to be in harmony with existing development. To ensure reasonable intensity of lot use, height, bulk and setback requirements were tightened; and design review instituted for new development to assist in ensuring high standards of environmental quality.

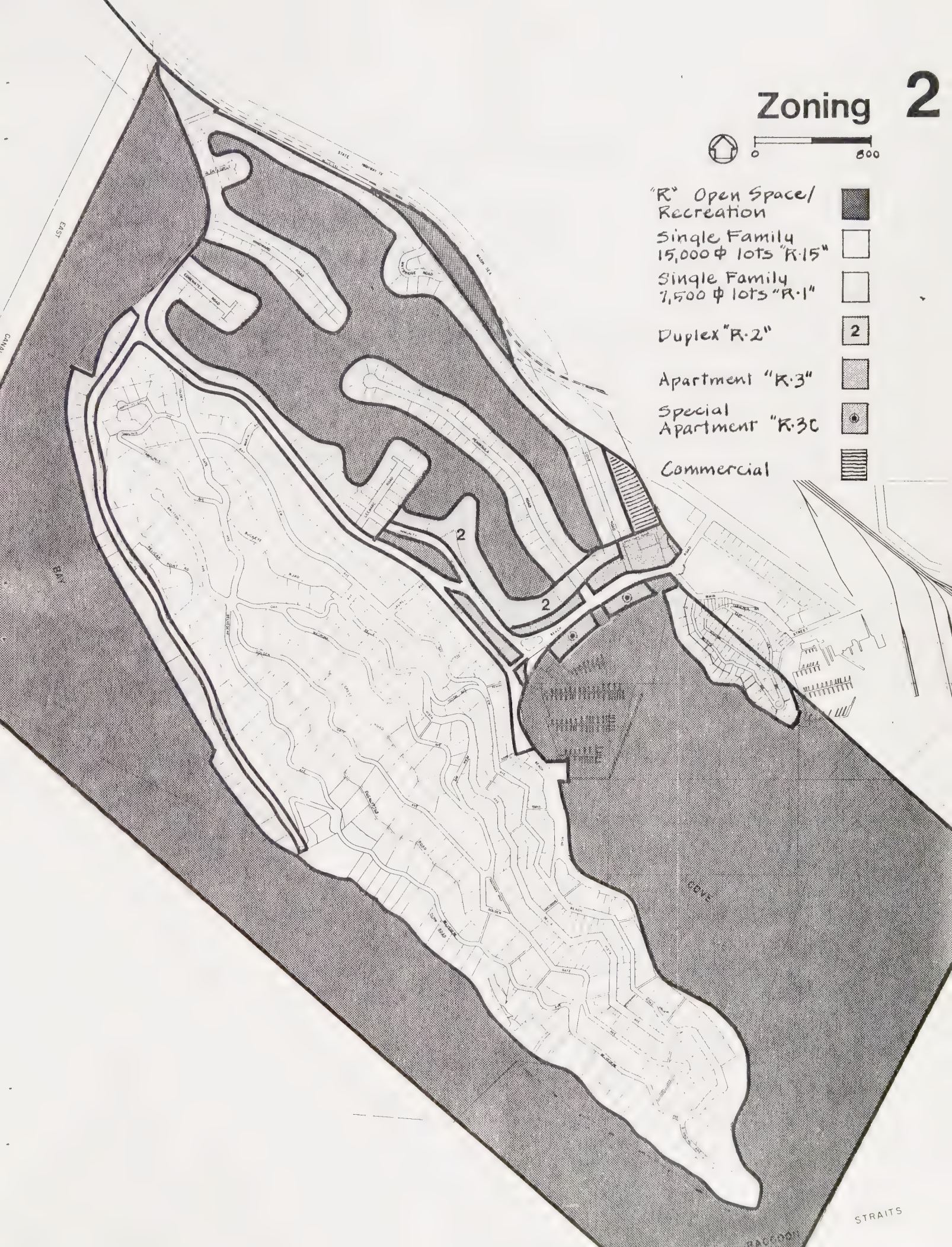
4. The road system is to be retained essentially as is, with no improvements planned beyond those needed to remove safety hazards.

5. Opportunities to expand the supply of moderate income housing in response to needs of the current population are to be explored and implemented. The Belvedere School site and the nursery school site are identified as potential sites for this use.

Zoning 2



- "R" Open Space/
Recreation 
- Single Family
15,000 ϕ lots "R-15" 
- Single Family
7,500 ϕ lots "R-1" 
- Duplex "R-2" 
- Apartment "R-3" 
- Special
Apartment "R-3C" 
- Commercial 



6. The open water surrounding Belvedere is to be retained open in perpetuity. (Additional restrictions were not needed.)

7. A desirable feature of every Belvedere home should be a usable outdoor open space. Minimum usable outdoor living space standards were incorporated into zoning and building regulations.

8. Magnificent views of the Bay, San Francisco, and the mountains are to be retained wherever possible. The new zoning ordinance incorporated provisions for dedication of a view site or easement, and city policy encourages gifts of viewpoints as appropriate memorials.

Further Recommendations

While the substantive land use issues have been resolved, the general plan study does indicate the need for these proposals:

1. Following the seismic and geologic study, in which the city will participate with the County during 1975, additional regulations may need to be added to the building code requiring special geologic studies prior to any development of sites in hazard zones. The study also may show some small areas within existing residential zones which should be rezoned open space for reasons of safety.

2. The future planning for use of the land east of Lagoon Road should take into account the adverse finding of the Noise Element, and design should include noise amelioration features.

3. Definition and relocation of the city limit lines between Belvedere and Tiburon is under discussion with the intent to solve the problem. Negotiations include the line through the Boardwalk shopping center, the resolution of the Corinthian Yacht Club boundary which has its Clubhouse in Belvedere and berths and parking area in Tiburon, and Corinthian Island properties.

4. Opportunities to provide additional recreational facilities in Belvedere should be explored and encouraged.

CIRCULATION

The circulation element is designed to offer a balanced circulation system which will both promote public health, welfare and safety, as well as preserve and enhance the quality of the community's environment. Underlying the preparation of transportation proposals for Belvedere is the city's longstanding policy -- that there will be no substantial change in the current road network.

Automobile Circulation

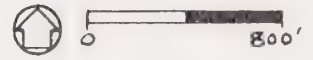
The auto circulation system in Belvedere consists of 10.5 miles of roads and represents a "full development" of the very simple road system. Tiburon Blvd., a state highway, serves the city as its major arterial street providing inter and intra County access; San Rafael Avenue and Lower Beach Road, Belvedere Avenue and Golden Gate Avenue form a secondary loop; Laurel and Oak act as a central collector. Most of the streets are interconnected so there is a two-way access to most residences. (Exhibit 3)

Among suburban cities, Belvedere has a street system which shows singular regard for topographic and environmental conditions, and disregard for auto movement. Most city streets are narrow and curving -- in many places so narrow only one car can pass at a time, while another waits in one of the "pull out" positions provided along its length. Many also have substantial grades. Interestingly, most streets were located on the steep terrain of the island, leaving more level ground for building sites. Road widening is, therefore, not only infeasible but also almost impossible -- even if the community wished to do it.

From one point of view, put forward in Belvedere's 1971 "Planning Study," the narrow curving streets are a community asset -- reducing the amount and speed of traffic, noise, and pollution -- and creating an atmosphere in which cyclists and pedestrians can feel relatively safe.

Evaluated from the standards common to most residential streets, they function at a minimal level: they do provide access to and from housing for residents and service vehicles and they do serve as access for emergency vehicles in the event of need. However, the streets can easily be blocked in some places by a stalled vehicle or an illegally parked car so that rigorous controls are needed and have been applied to maintain their operational status. (See "Community Safety")

Auto Circulation 3



Whatever the point of view, the streets do substantially affect the number of trips each household in Belvedere makes each day. While most suburban communities generate over 10 trips per house each day, Belvedere households, according to a 1974 traffic count done by Marin County, generate only 3 trips per day. Such a low trip/day/house statistic suggests the street system encourages residents to plan combined purpose trips; it may also indicate a latent demand for some kind of convenient small scale public transportation within the city.

Parking

As the city approaches full development, parking is the constant problem. Most sites that are left are the steep ones where providing the required two parking spaces per unit is difficult; many of the older houses, pre zoning requirement, do not have them at all; and for some houses that have two spaces, two are not adequate. Tandem on-site parking has not proved to be a very good solution. On-street parking is very limited and road widths do not allow any additional on-street parking in most places.

Public Transit

The Golden Gate Transit District provides Belvedere with inter city bus service, primarily to San Francisco and other parts of Marin. During commuting hours only, buses run along San Rafael Avenue and Lower Beach Road. Non-peak hour bus service is confined to Tiburon Blvd. Supplementing bus service to San Francisco, there are three popular ferry runs between Tiburon and San Francisco per commute time, both in the morning and evening. There is no intra city bus service of any kind. Marin County has plans to improve bus service within the County and open up the possibility of some new types of local service when voter approval for increased assessment or other financing can be secured.

Pedestrian Ways

Several walks and lanes exist to serve Belvedere pedestrians. Walks follow the contours of the land, lanes ascend or descend Belvedere and Corinthian Islands. Many are remnants of the times when walking was a more popular activity in historical Belvedere, and are now in disuse, but all are increasingly important as alternatives to auto use become more needed. Lanes are being improved and kept in usable condition.

Bicycles

Belvedere has developed, in cooperation with Tiburon, a multi-purpose path along the railroad right of way paralleling Tiburon Blvd. and providing access for resident bicycle enthusiasts to the rest of Marin County. Within the city, street widths have made it impossible to create separate bicycle lanes, but low speed limits enable cyclists and motorists to use most streets simultaneously with safety.

Future Circulation Need

A small increment of growth is anticipated in Belvedere, which will generate a corresponding increase in traffic on the system already near capacity. While off street parking and on street right-of-way requirements are likely to keep the city's auto system functional, this growth should be accompanied by a vigorous search for and promotion of feasible non-auto oriented transit alternatives.

Recommendations

1. City policy to keep the present road network intact and "as is" should be continued. No street widening or improvements should be done beyond the removal of safety hazards.
2. Auto traffic unrelated to residents, their guests and service needs should be discouraged on Belvedere Island through signing at intersections along San Rafael Avenue and Lower Beach Road, similar to that done on Corinthian Island.
3. In addition to that required by ordinance, off street parking is to be encouraged; tandem parking should be used only as a last resort.
4. New forms of public transit offering comfort and convenience should be explored jointly with Tiburon and/or the County for feasibility in Belvedere. The purpose would be to serve intra city and intra Tiburon peninsula transit needs, including pickup and drop off at key transit exchange points such as the ferry and Alto Wye. One promising mode is Dial-a-bus, a minibus system which would come on call to take passengers door to door within the Tiburon peninsula; a second is a minibus system with regular routes and schedules.

5. Bicycle use within Belvedere and for commuting to and from the ferry should be made easier through:
 - a. Provision of a bicycle lane on San Rafael Avenue where feasible.
 - b. Use of speed measures such as lowering the speed limit and/or traffic bumps on roads where traffic speed is a deterrent to bicycle use.
 - c. Working with Tiburon to expand bicycle parking at the ferry.
6. The pedestrian system should be renovated, expanded, and interconnected per the recommendations in the 1970 Parks and Open Space Plan:
 - a. All closed lanes should be reopened.
 - b. Cedar Lane (finished) and Woodwardia Lane (partially done), which cross the ridge through saddles at Golden Gate Avenue and Belvedere Avenue, and Golden Gate Avenue and Madrona Avenue, as special important links in the pedestrian circulation system have high priority for completion of renovation and continued maintenance.
 - c. New walks and lanes, needed to interconnect the West Shore area, via Pelican Drive and Laurel-Oak Avenues, with the Main Park, Community Center, churches and school, should be built.
 - d. All the old and new lanes and walks should be collected and interconnected by a circumambulatory walk along San Rafael Avenue, Golden Gate Avenue, Belvedere Avenue, and Beach Road.
 - e. The design and construction of each lane should closely fit the immediate environment and serve to preserve the amenity of adjacent lands.

Non-Auto Circulation 4



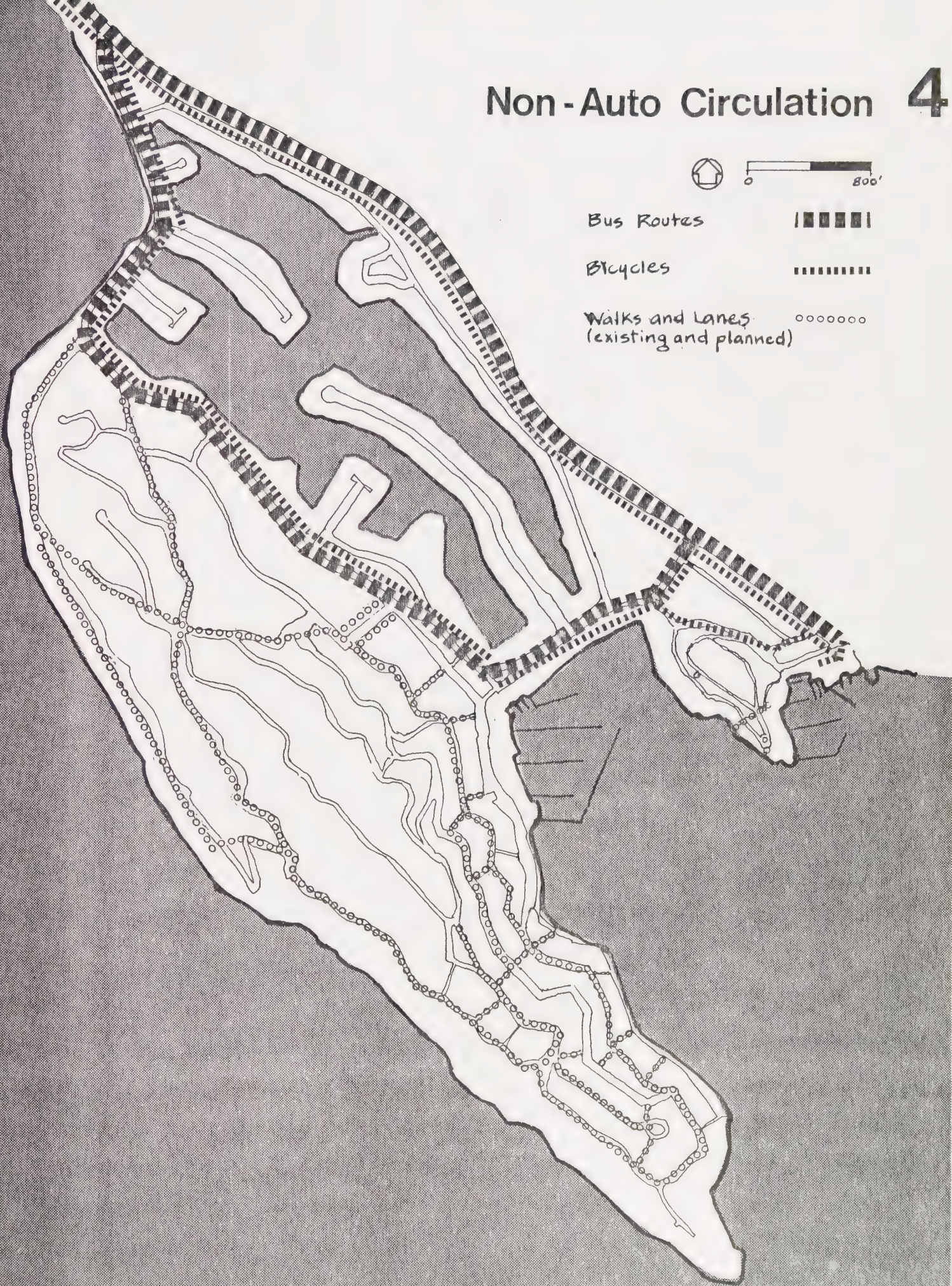
Bus Routes



Bicycles



Walks and Lanes
(existing and planned)



HOUSING

The housing element, required under state law, consists of standards and plans for the improvement of housing, provision of adequate sites for housing and "adequate provision for all economic segments of the community."

These general goals have been specifically identified by the state as the starting place for thinking about housing:

1. To promote and insure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, race, or ethnic background.
2. To promote and insure the provision of housing selection by location, type, price and tenure.
3. To promote and insure open and free choice of housing for all.
4. To act as a guide for municipal decisions and how these decisions affect the quality of the housing stock and inventory.

Within this general framework, the housing element of a community needs to be completed in the context of its housing market area, since many of the housing problems are area-wide or regional in nature and require interjurisdictional solutions. Thus, communities are urged to prepare and adopt a housing element in the context of their county's element and region's where applicable -- and modify and elaborate where warranted by specific local conditions.

Belvedere, incorporated in 1897, is an old established community among Marin cities. With a 1975 housing stock of 985 dwelling units, it represents a small, mostly developed portion of a much larger housing market area: the Richardson Bay communities -- Belvedere, Tiburon, Sausalito, Marin City, Mill Valley, Strawberry. The Richardson Bay communities in turn are part of Marin County's housing market. The context for Belvedere's housing element is therefore drawn, where appropriate, within those larger frameworks.

Problems

1. Economic Diversity

In Marin County, there is a widening crisis in housing for low and moderate income families -- families with incomes up to \$14,000 per year. The slump in housing construction of the last few years has increased the demand pressure on existing housing in Marin County. Already a high demand area, Marin has experienced housing value increases significantly greater than the rate of inflation. Higher prices, coupled with fluctuating high interest rates on home mortgages, have brought about the obvious result: the economic diversity of Marin families is decreasing, with low and moderate income families less able to afford and compete for the housing the County does have to offer.

Being closest to San Francisco, trends in the Richardson Bay communities show even greater selectivity. Rapid increases in population, densities and housing prices have been characteristic -- with an especially heavy influx of small apartments, single and wealthy residents and tourists.

In Belvedere, these trends have had the effect of narrowing the already limited economic diversity of the community. The 1970 census put median house value at over \$50,000 (highest value in census) and median rent at \$275. Sales records of the 1967-1971 period more accurately reflect property values:

BELVEDERE -- AVERAGE PRICE OF SF RESIDENTIAL SALES*

	<u>No. Sold</u>	<u>Average Price</u>
1967	24	\$ 61,060
1968	29	69,640
1969	20	73,630
1970	23	80,350
1971	29	90,310
1973	26	106,140
1974	39	123,715

*Complete sales records, multiple listings only

The rise in property values has been accompanied by a much faster rise in assessed valuation -- a tripling of assessed valuation over the last ten years -- which in turn has affected large increases in taxes.

Using the test of overpayment of rent, that is families paying more than 25% of gross income for housing, there were some 105 households in Belvedere in 1970 in need of housing assistance. (See Table A.) Recent trends increasing direct and indirect housing costs are likely also to have increased need levels particularly for elderly Belvedere residents on fixed incomes. There has also been some impact apparent on middle income families -- school authorities surmised the drop in Belvedere school registration of 50 children in Fall 1974 reflects the fact that young families are having difficulty affording Belvedere housing.

2. Housing and the Elderly

According to the 1970 census, 10.4% or 276 of Belvedere's population is 65 years of age and older, a proportion higher than the state average of 9%. In a town of predominantly large single family homes (6.7 rooms per house, owner, 4.4 renter), this 10.4 % of the population occupies nearly 20% of the dwelling units. One hundred and forty-one units in the city, 16%, contained only one person. Large houses and the low median population per house (2.8 owner units, 2.0 renter) suggests there may be a mismatch between housing needs of Belvedere's senior citizens and the housing supply and that a portion of the housing supply is being underused.

The census also indicated some 10% of the elderly, or 28, are in need of housing assistance. (Table A., p. 16)

Alternatives for elderly in Belvedere are very limited. Duplex and apartments are only 15% of the housing stock; and, the apartments are both high priced and difficult to get into, having long waiting lists. While many seniors choose to remain in their large houses, it is probable that if more suitable housing at reasonable prices were available in the city, many would choose that.

3. Housing Condition

Many of Belvedere's houses are old (1/3 were built 1900-1950), and of a vintage that needs constant maintenance, and possible major renovation to keep up or attain a sound condition. In 1960, when housing condition was included as part of the census, 45 units were found to be deteriorating or delapidated. Since then, private rehabilitation may have taken care of many of the

(text continued p. 17)

TABLE A:
BELVEDERE HOUSING PROFILE

Population	2599		2660 (1974)
Housing Units	965		985 (1974 from Building permits)
Owner	653	66%	
Renter	245	34%	
One Family	820	85%	
Two or More	143	15%	
Population per dwelling unit	Median		Average
	2.5		2.9
Owner	2.8		3.1
Renter	2.0		2.2
Rooms per dwelling unit	Median		
	6.2		
Owner	6.7		
Renter	4.4		
Housing Age			
Pre 1940	232	29%	
1940-1949	74	8%	
1950-1959	457	47%	
1960-1970	200	21%	

BELVEDERE HOUSING ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Currently requiring assistance*		Additional households expected in locality**
Total	105	11
Elderly and handi- capped	28	3
Non-elderly/handi- capped	75	8

Source: 1970 Census supplemented with fourth count data from ABAG computer analysis; housing assistance projections from Tiburon Planning Department.

* Total includes all families overpaying rent as more than 25% of gross income, elderly with income below 80% of county median for families and unrelated individuals, unemployed who are disabled or handicapped, and more than 6 person families with income below 80% of the county median. Elderly includes elderly families with income less than \$10,000 or one person households income less than \$3,000. Non-elderly includes all other families currently needing assistance.

** Apportioned one year share of total number allocated for low/moderate income housing in Richardson Bay Communities Planning Area.

problem units -- and in addition those which have developed needs since the 1960 Census. In fact, in a community of Belvedere's wealth, private rehabilitation can be expected to have taken care of many of the problems.

Where condition difficulties persist, and are a public problem, is likely to be among the elderly who are on fixed incomes and have limited capability for maintenance chores. No housing condition information is available, however, to identify the extent of the problem.

Obstacles

1. Belvedere, as a community in the last stage of growth, has very limited available land, most of which is unsuitable for moderate income housing for reasons of high site cost, small site, and/or high development costs.

2. Federal categorical housing programs have been phased out. Community Development Block Grants are replacing the programs, but they must be applied for, and priority is given toward moderate income community housing needs.

Suggested Belvedere Housing Goals

1. Seek responsible housing market area solutions to housing problems through interjurisdictional cooperation.
2. Expand the supply of good housing in Belvedere available to middle and moderate income households, especially elderly.
3. Relate growth to the capacity of the residential service system, community planning and improvements.
4. Involve citizens in updating and carrying out housing plans.

Implementation

1. Belvedere is participating in the Residential Review Board for Richardson Bay Communities now being formed. A framework designed by Marin County, the Board will manage growth on an interjurisdictional basis. All residential development other than single family homes on previously

approved lots will require Review Board approval; and the Board will review proposals using a rating system containing incentives for including low and moderate income housing, and for maintaining high standards of environmental quality.

2. Within Belvedere, the city's options for achieving its housing goals are very limited. The following possibilities have been identified:

- a. If school use of the Belvedere School site is phased out, this site will be considered for reuse for moderate income housing and/or elderly housing.
- b. The Nursery School site offers a particularly promising possibility for reuse in elderly housing if its current use is phased out. Access to transit and shopping are excellent.
- c. Consideration of a new policy toward second units for possible applicability in Belvedere, a policy which would allow second units under specific, well-defined conditions for the purpose of expanding the housing supply for moderate income households and/or the elderly. A discussion of this idea is contained in the Appendix, page 38.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY:
OPEN SPACE, SCENIC ROUTES, CONSERVATION

As Belvedere residents began to turn their attention to planning tools in 1970 and 1971, the retention of environmental quality was foremost among community objectives. The first study, commissioned to Berridge, Becker and Julin, was for a long range development plan for parks and recreation, including the entire open space fabric of the city. The resulting plan, in 1972 elaborated upon by the Open Space Committee, embodies the usual concerns of the 'Open Space' and 'Scenic Highways' Elements of a General Plan. 'Conservation Element' concerns and other environmental quality issues were raised and dealt with during the 1971 "Planning Study."

Environmental Quality -- Existing Environment

As a compact, small scale, almost wholly developed island community, Belvedere's environmental assets include low density, structures that tend to fit with the existing hill and lagoon terrain, lush vegetation, narrow winding streets, open water surrounding, magnificent marine views from the streets, walks, and lanes of the island to the surrounding Bay area, intimate inward-oriented views for the Lagoon area, and important public open spaces at key entrances or site locations in the open space fabric of the city: Main Park, Belvedere Cove, San Rafael Avenue edge on Richardson Bay and potentially a park on Lagoon Road visible from Tiburon Blvd.

Existing Open Space

Existing permanent open space includes water related areas, parks and view areas.

Water related areas:

1. The open water and landlocked water areas within the city limits.
2. The city-owned beaches and tidelots, including parts of the Belvedere Cove and the edge of Richardson Bay on San Rafael Avenue.
3. The privately owned harbor and tidelots, including approximately 1,000 linear feet along Beach Road owned by Belvedere Land Company, and the San Francisco Yacht Club.

Parks:

4. "Main Park," the city park adjacent to Community Hall.
5. "Lagoon Road Park," the strip between Lagoon Road and Tiburon Highway owned by State Highway Department and leased to Belvedere.
6. "Park" at Beach Road and San Rafael Avenue intersection owned by the city.
7. Cove Beach.

View and other areas:

8. Areas providing views of the Lagoon at San Rafael Avenue between Windward and Edgewater Roads, at Lagoon Road at the Belvedere Sailing Society, and at the dredging access to the Lagoon near the end of Mallard Road.
9. View area at Beach Road and Belvedere Avenue at the Winifred Allen Bench.
10. View easements at turn-arounds on West Shore Road.
11. Cliff areas above West Shore Road owned by the city.
12. View areas at Southeast end of Corinthian Island at end of Bellevue.
13. All existing lanes on Belvedere and Corinthian Islands, whether in use or dormant.
14. Various small spaces at street junctions where city-owned rights of way permit development, in varying degrees, of small rests, short-cut walks and steps, planted areas, etc.

Examples are:

Juncture of Oak and Bella Vista Avenues
Juncture of Oak and Bayview Avenues
Juncture of Fern and Madrona Avenues
Juncture of Lagoon Road and Tiburon Blvd.
Circular park at end of Golden Gate Avenue

15. Undeveloped privately owned properties, including buildable lots and non-buildable contiguous substandard lots.

16. City owned one-foot wide strip along southwest shore of Corinthian Island.

Policies

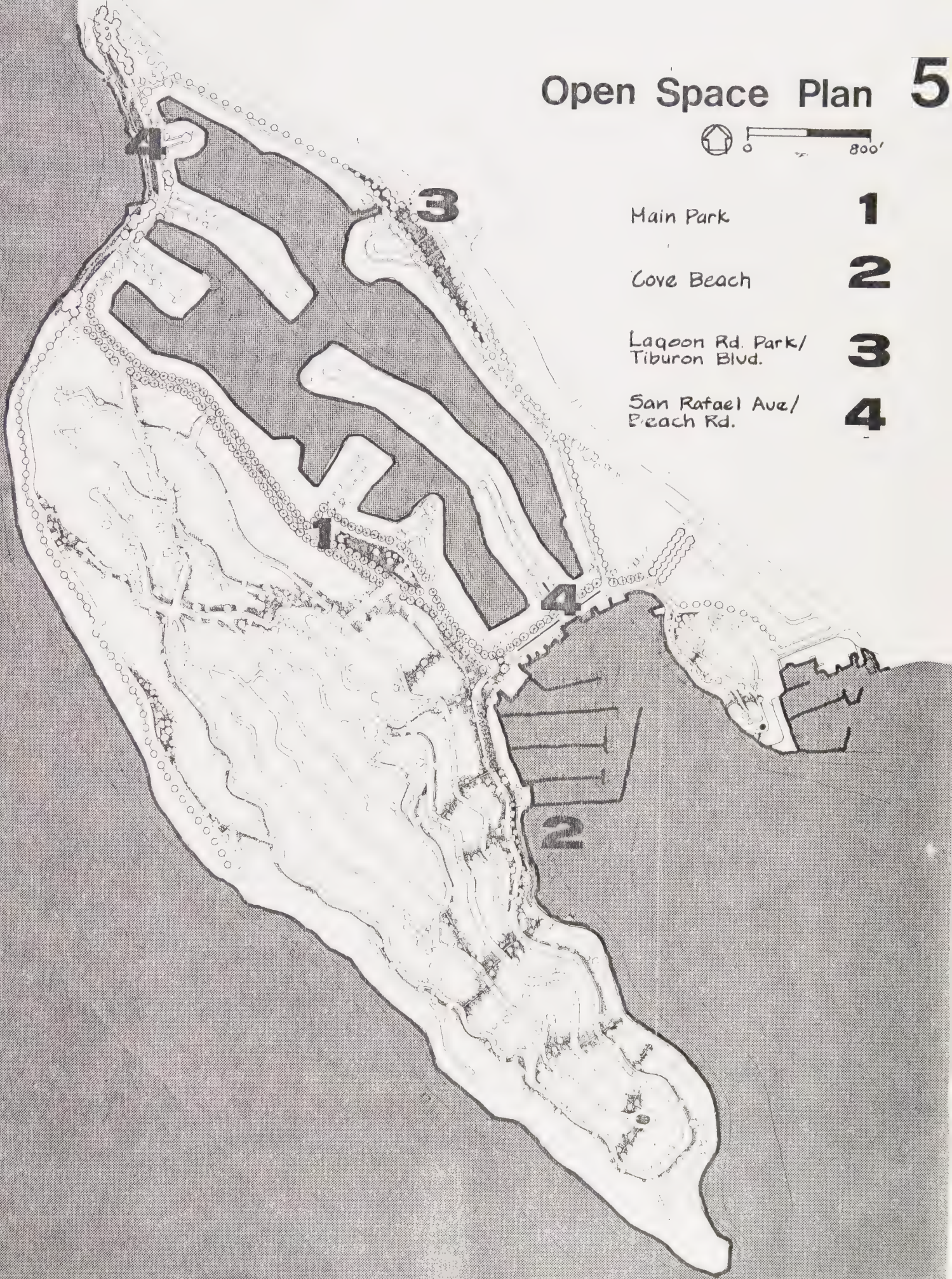
The following are the environmental quality policies and related implementation devices. The first four were developed in the "Open Space Plan" and the "Belvedere Planning Study": the fifth one is proposed as part of the general plan study.

1. Views are to be preserved.
 2. Open space should be secured by a variety of means, including purchase, dedication of land, development rights, view easements or view corridors. Provisions for dedication were incorporated as part of the recent zoning ordinance. (An additional method is proposed under recommendations.)
 3. Encroachment on open water should be limited to public purposes. At present, open water is protected by a combination of public ownership, Audubon Society and yacht club ownerships, recreation zoning, Army Corps of Engineers and Bay Conservation and Development Commission jurisdiction. BCDC's Bay Plan imposes such stringent limitations that it is unlikely that development would be permitted on the few privately held open water lots.
 4. The scenic qualities of major circulation routes within the city should be enhanced: the Belvedere edge of Tiburon Blvd., the San Rafael Avenue - Beach Road loop, and the pedestrian system of lanes and walks. (See Circulation Element)
 5. All public and private actions that significantly affect the quality of the environment will be reviewed in accordance with the unique characteristics of each proposed action and each potential location under the specific mandatory procedures adopted. For the city this will be done by the City Planning Commission.
- As mentioned in the Land Use Element policy section, considerations of view, of compatibility with the surrounding environment and of intensity of site use are factors to be reviewed.
6. Areas prone to geologic hazards should be closely regulated; field investigation of hazard prior to development should be required; and the city should accept dedication of land as open space for safety reasons.

Open Space Plan 5



- Main Park **1**
- Cove Beach **2**
- Lagoon Rd. Park/
Tiburon Blvd. **3**
- San Rafael Ave/
Beach Rd. **4**



Open Space Plan

The adopted "Parks and Recreation Long Range Development Plan," done in 1970, incorporates plans for individual and key public open spaces within an open space system plan which includes the two important scenic routes and the proposals concerning the design considerations of important auto and pedestrian ways. The open space plan is depicted in Exhibit 5. The following specific plans are incorporated by reference:

For public open spaces, the plans for

1. Main Park Community Center Complex
2. Cove Beach
3. Lagoon Road Park

For scenic routes:

4. Tiburon Blvd. treatment (within Lagoon Park Plan)
5. San Rafael Avenue and Beach Road
6. The Pedestrian System: walks, lanes, and proposed interconnections.

Additional Recommendations

1. A launching access for small boats, to be used by residents, should be created.
2. Pedestrian access to beach and water areas should be provided.
3. As an addition to open space acquisition tools, the city should consider the creation of a Belvedere Land Trust, in which the city could acquire and hold title to land, easements and development rights.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

This element identifies and evaluates geologic, seismic and community safety hazards. Based on available information, it assesses the levels of risk involved and provides recommendations for actions designed to reduce risks and minimize losses.

Analysis and evaluation of community safety in Belvedere focuses on three potential areas of concern: Slope stability, seismic safety risks, and safety hazards relating to police and fire protection. Geologic information has been drawn primarily from research on the Bay Area done by the Division of Mines and Geology; it is supplemented with limited available local information. Map data is drawn from the USGS map "Geology of San Francisco North Quadrangle" in which most of Belvedere is included. At 1 : 24,000 scale, the data provides a good macro view of the geology of Belvedere -- permitting an accurate general estimate of geologic and seismic risks, but is not very useful for finegrained analysis. Police and fire hazard information is drawn from interviews with the police and fire chiefs and the Planning Commission.

Geology

The terrain of Belvedere and Corinthian Islands consists of a complex assemblage of Franciscan formation rocks, such as serpentinite, greenstone, graywacke, chert, shale, sandstone, and glaucophane schist. While most of these types exist in small amounts on the islands, predominant are greenstone -- rocks of volcanic origin -- and sandstone -- tough, nonporous, thickbedded graywacke (Exhibit 6). Quaternary deposits -- fine to medium grained sands, with minor amounts of clay possibly included, characterize the geology of some lower portions of the east side of Belvedere island, including lower Beach Road and San Rafael Avenue. The Lagoon area is 1-1/2' to 3' of homogenous artificial fill materials over younger bay mud. The mud ranges in depth from a minimum of 20' to over 90', as found in a recent preconstruction boring.

Slope Stability

Slope stability on the greenstone and sandstone is high, except where it has been heavily altered or sheared. Since Belvedere is urbanized, the net effect on slide development

Geology : Potential Hazards

6



Greenstone, Sandstone
• stable



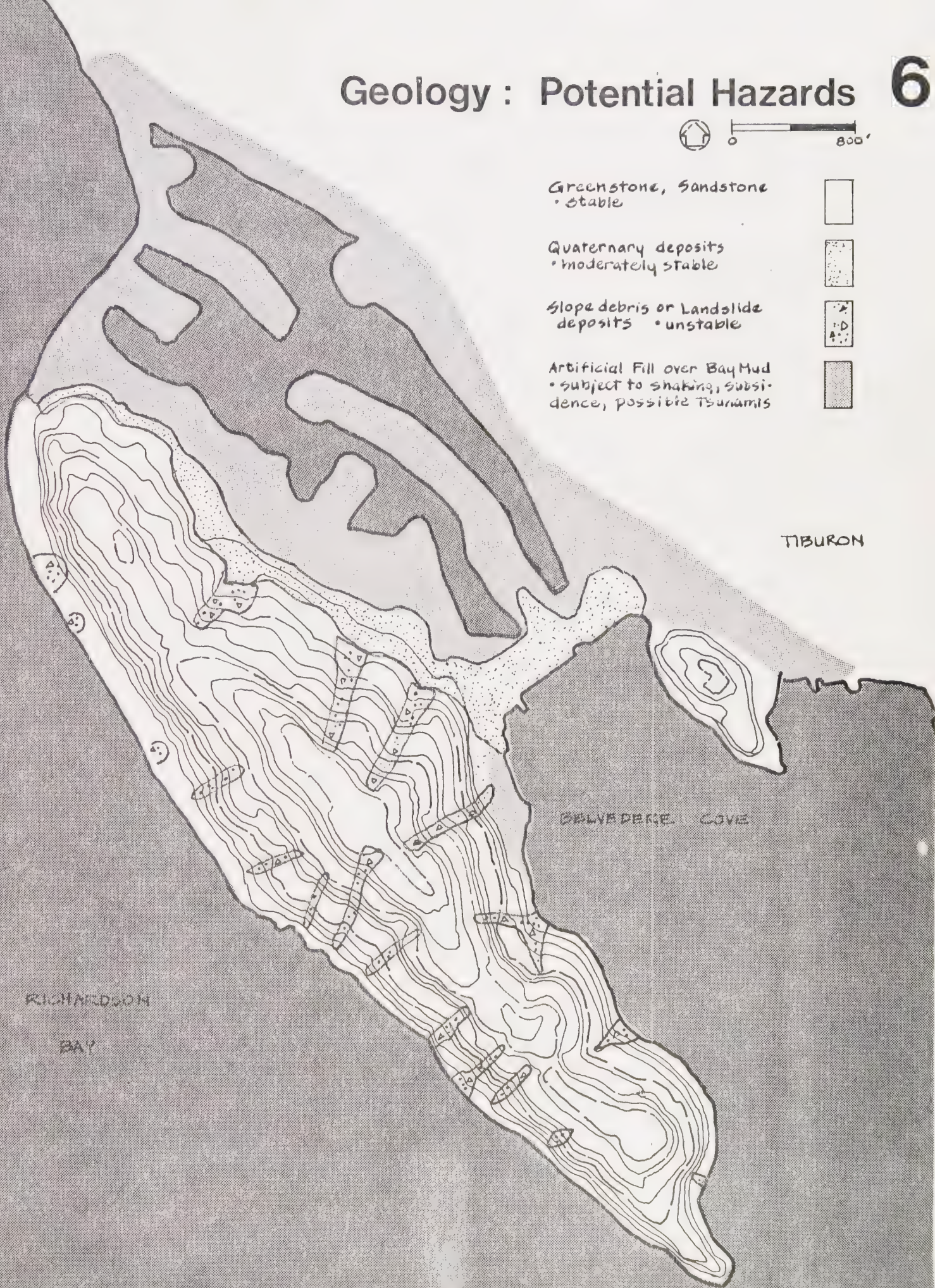
Quaternary deposits
• moderately stable



Slope debris or Landslide
deposits • unstable



Artificial Fill over Bay Mud
• subject to shaking, subsi-
dence, possible Tsunamis



TIBURON

BELVEDERE COVE

RICHMONDSON

BAY

is difficult to determine. Non-engineered or improperly engineered cuts usually reduce the stability of that slope and possibly may reactivate an old slide, or develop new ones. Other accouterments of urbanization, such as the paving of streets, construction of many houses, installation of storm drains, and planting of trees and shrubs, may have the opposite effect by increasing the amount of rainfall necessary to saturate a large area of ground and by stabilizing the uppermost portions of the soil. Available information suggests there may be some slope stability problems in the rock areas where there are slope debris or landslide deposits. Field inspection also shows there may be a problem area along the upper side of Beach Road from Acacia to Bay View.

Slope stability of the quaternary deposits along Lower Beach Road and San Rafael is considered moderate, on the fill over Bay mud -- low.

Seismic Risks

The rock portions of Belvedere and Corinthian Islands are likely to be relatively safe during an earthquake since damage from ground shaking has been minimal in areas of similar geology. Surface faulting is unlikely since Belvedere lies between the two main active faults in the Bay Area: the Hayward Fault to the east, the San Andreas to the west.

In the Lagoon area, seismic risks do exist in several forms: first, earthquake ground motion may be amplified in these unconsolidated, water-saturated sediments. Second, subsidence, that is ground sinking, is also possible, although because of the homogenous nature of the fill, settling is more likely to be even than differential. Third, there may be tsunamis danger, that is damage caused by an earthquake-generated wave, from some far distant source.* This danger also extends to other low-lying areas in the city.

*The extent of the potential tsunamis hazard has been estimated from the following information: The highest recorded wave was 7.5' at Fort Point following the 1964 Alaska earthquake; Ritter Dupre estimates one with a 20' run-up at Fort Point may arrive once in 200 years. The sheltering effects of the land masses in the Bay are likely to make the maximum level of such a wave on Belvedere west side 10' to 15', and lower in the Lagoon area which is sheltered by the island itself.

The levels of risk both on Belvedere and Corinthian Islands and in the Lagoon area, based on the available information, suggest radical action is not warranted and that more detailed study would be helpful to identify and evaluate the severity of trouble areas. In support of this view is the fact that in housing areas similar to the Lagoon, where risks are obviously highest, houses of wood frame construction have survived ground shaking and subsidence -- even in the strongest known earthquake -- without loss of life. Structures with the highest potential hazard in the Lagoon, those of brick or stone or having large areas of glass, could be made safer through remedial measures to reduce structural hazards.

In the absence of more definitive information, indicating problems severer than those known, community consensus is that these levels of risk are acceptable.

Fire Hazard

Fire protection is provided by a volunteer fire department. Its competence was recently recognized in early 1975 by an improved fire insurance rating. However, the fire hazard potential in Belvedere continues to be a community concern. In part, the hazard is caused by the large number of Eucalyptus with their highly inflammable droppings; in part, it is caused by the large number of downlots which, due to difficult access, grow wild and contain flammable debris and brush. Houses built close together, particularly in the Lagoon area also contribute to the fire hazard potential.

Police, Fire Engine Access

Access during fire, or other emergency, for fire and/or police vehicles has been and will continue to be a topic of persisting community attention. The narrow city roads present occasional access difficulties, particularly where on-street parking makes the right-of-way tight.

Recommendations

1. To improve the information base for seismic safety and slope stability, Belvedere is participating in the geologic study planned for the southeast part of Marin County and scheduled for 1975. Geologic mapping is to be done at a scale of 1' - 1000', and geology

experts will be available to the city during the study to assist in risk evaluation and answer specific questions.

2. To more accurately determine the effect of tsunamis on Belvedere, the city should promote and encourage a testing on the Corps of Engineers' model of San Francisco Bay. If the need is indicated, an evacuation plan should then be developed and publicized.
3. To reduce structural hazards (following the County study):
 - a. Inspection and evaluation criteria for evaluation of existing structures should be developed; and,
 - b. In identified risk areas, a requirement for geologic studies and appropriate engineering prior to building or major remodeling should be incorporated into the building code.
4. To reduce fire hazard:
 - a. The city's program of systematic downlot and Eucalyptus cleanup should be stepped up. The program works as follows: the owner is informed his property constitutes a fire hazard and is given a time limit to clean it up. If he fails to do so, the city cleans up the lot and assesses the owner.
 - b. The Planning Commission, with the building inspector and fire chief, should periodically review the building code to ensure maximum reasonable fire hazard protection.
5. To assure fire and police vehicular access in places where 10' road width is critical, parking space limits should be painted on all Corinthian and Belvedere islands' streets, and cars cited which overhang those limits.
6. Following the safety study, an information program should be undertaken to tell residents about potential hazards and measures that can be taken to alleviate them.

NOISE

In recognition of the adverse environmental impact of noise: that excessive noise is socially disruptive, may be physically and psychologically damaging, and can diminish property values and levels of productivity, the State now requires each community:

- to assess noise problems within the community,
- to measure and project noise impact of major transportation arteries,
- to adopt standards and criteria relating land uses to reasonable noise levels, and
- to outline implementation measures.

Sources

As part of its effort to prepare a Noise Element, Belvedere has participated in a Noise Study with Marin County Department of Public Works. The information contained herein is drawn from the background report done for the County by its consultant, Bolt, Beranek and Newman in 1974; from the Federal pamphlet "Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety;" and from Marin DPW noise measurements.

Definition of Terms

1. Decible: A unit for measuring the relative loudness of sounds detectable by the human ear, abbreviated dB(A).
2. L_{eq} is the equivalent noise level of the steady noise containing the same amount of energy as the fluctuating noise over the same period.
3. L_{dn} is the day-night average noise level, L_{eq} , with a penalty for the nighttime hours -- that is noise levels occurring between 11 pm and 7 am are treated as though they are 10 dB noisier than they are.

Recommended Standards

The following table indicates the equivalent sound levels necessary to protect health and safety.

TABLE B: RECOMMENDED STANDARDS FOR EQUIVALENT SOUND LEVELS

	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Indoor</u>			<u>Outdoor</u>		
		<u>Activity Inter- ference</u>	<u>Hearing Loss Con- sideration</u>	<u>To Protect Against Both Effects^b</u>	<u>Activity Inter- ference</u>	<u>Hearing Loss Con- sideration</u>	<u>To Protect Against Both Effects^b</u>
Residential with Outside Space	L _{dn} L _{eq} (24)	45	70	45	55	70	55
Residential with No Outside Space	L _{dn} L _{eq} (24)	45	70	45			
Commercial	L _{eq} (24)	a	70	70 ^c	a	70	70 ^c
Educational	L _{eq} (24) L _{eq} (24) ^d	45	70	45	55	70	55
Recreational Areas	L _{eq} (24)	a	70	70 ^c	a	70	70 ^c

-
- Code: a. Since different types of activities appear to be associated with different levels, identification of a maximum level for activity interference may be difficult except in those circumstances where speech communication is a critical activity.
- b. Based on lowest level.
- c. Based only on hearing loss.
- d. An L_{eq}(8) of 75 dB may be identified in these situations so long as the exposure over the remaining 16 hours per day is low enough to result in a negligible contribution to the 24-hour average, i.e., no greater than an L_{eq} of 60 dB.

Noise in Belvedere

The major noise generators affecting Belvedere are the two major roads serving the city: Tiburon Blvd. and San Rafael-Beach loop. The following table shows existing and projected sound levels at selected distances from the center line of each road. Traffic noise includes buses.

		Average Daily Traffic	Distance from ^{CL} of Roadbed Noise Calculation in L _{dn} dB(A)						
			45	55	65	70	75	80	
Tiburon Blvd. Trestle Glen to Main St.		1974	15,824	1440	360	90	45	22	11
		1990	15,000- 20,000	1600	400	100	50	25	12
San Rafael Ave. - Beach Tiburon Blvd. - Tiburon Blvd. (County)		1974	2,917	480	120	30	15	7	3
		1990*	5,000- 10,000	1120	280	70	35	17	8
(GES)		1990*	3,300	538	130	33	17	8	4

Using the "protection" level, for residential areas -- 55 dB(A), housing along Lagoon Road and the north end of Cove Road exceeds the limit being affected by Tiburon Blvd. traffic noise; similarly, housing on both sides of the San Rafael Ave. - Beach Road loop is affected. In these cases, however, neither existing nor projected levels fall into the hearing loss consideration category, and in fact range 5-10 decibels below that level.

By another mode of evaluation, community response, Belvedere can be characterized as a relatively quiet community in which noise is not a significant public problem.

*The "high" 1990 estimate done by the county is based on population projections resulting from uncontrolled operation of the market. It seems excessive since Belvedere is mostly developed, and since street capacity in the City will act as a brake on car trip increases over the next 20 years. Assuming modest increases in the use of auto alternatives, the second estimate, roughly a 10 percent traffic increase is more likely.

Community Response Predictions
Related to Noise Levels

L_{dn} for Resi-
dential Areas

- | | | |
|------|--|---------|
| I. | Some noise complaints may occur, and noise may, occasionally, interfere with some activities. | 55-65 |
| II. | In developed areas, individuals may complain, perhaps vigorously and group action is possible. | 65-75 |
| III. | In developed areas, repeated vigorous complaints and concerted group action might be expected. | Over 75 |

Belvedere is a category I community. Within the city, there has been sensitivity to the transmission of sound over water and to the sounding of the fire horn each Saturday at 12 noon pursuant to state law. However, most of the few complaints which have been made over the years have arisen from sources outside the community -- and therefore outside of direct control. Recent examples have been complaints about noise from a restaurant in Sausalito featuring hard rock, a construction site along Richardson Bay, motorcycles on local streets, and a helicopter straying off course, on its way to Sausalito heliport.

Conclusion

Belvedere should continue to maintain noise levels compatible with public health and safety within the city. Since there are no existing or foreseeable noise generators within the community itself which threaten these levels, no noise ordinance or special noise regulations are needed at this time.

Recommendations

1. If the community response indicators change, the Planning Commission should re-evaluate the need for noise regulatory measures within the city.
2. As part of the Richardson Bay Residential Review Board, Belvedere should promote regulation of construction noise where environmental impact of noise will exceed protection limits.

General Plan 7



0 800'

Single Family • low
density • 15,000 ϕ lots



Single Family • med.
density • 7,500 ϕ



Duplex



Apartment
Special Apartment



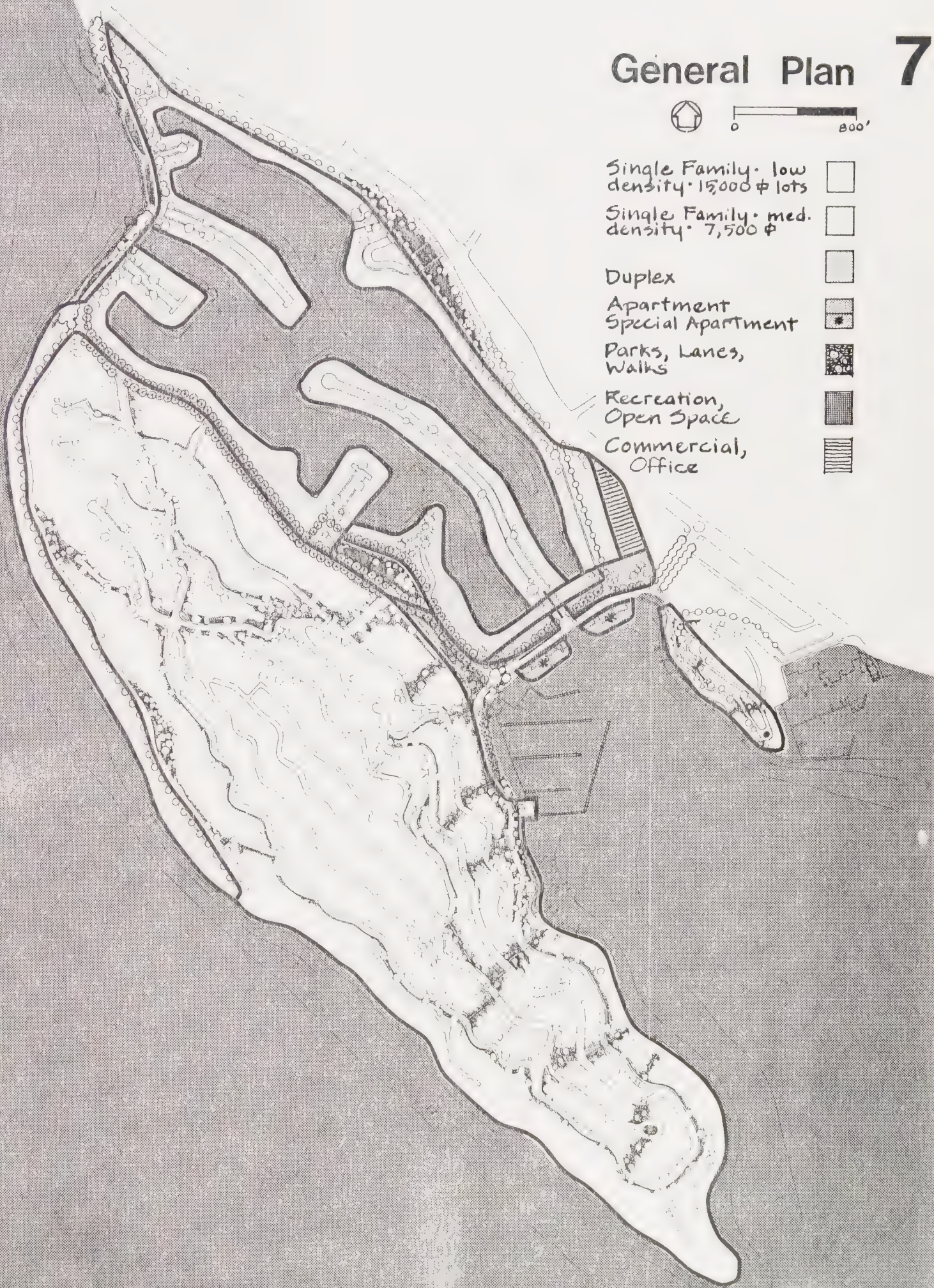
Parks, Lanes,
Walks



Recreation,
Open Space



Commercial,
Office



GENERAL PLAN SUMMARY

The following recommendations represent the major policies and proposals of the Belvedere General Plan.

Land Use

1. Significant population growth is discouraged.
2. Residential densities are controlled to preserve the character of Belvedere.
3. New construction is to be in harmony with existing development.
4. The open water surrounding Belvedere is to be retained open in perpetuity.
5. A desirable feature of every Belvedere home should be a usable outdoor open space.
6. Magnificent views of the Bay, San Francisco, and the mountains are to be retained wherever possible.

Circulation

1. Retain the present road network intact; limit street widening and improvements to removal of safety hazards.
2. Auto traffic unrelated to the residents, their guests and service needs should be discouraged on Belvedere Island by posting island streets at their intersection with San Rafael Avenue.
3. New forms of public transit offering comfort and convenience should be explored jointly with Tiburon and/or the County for feasibility in Belvedere.
4. Bicycle use within the city should be facilitated.
5. The pedestrian system is to be renovated and expanded.

Housing

1. In the city's effort to seek responsible housing market area programs to fulfill local and area wide housing goals, the city is participating in the Richardson Bay Communities Residential Review Board.
2. Within Belvedere, the city will pursue the following measures as possible means of achieving local housing goals:
 - a. Reuse of the Belvedere School site, if the school use is phased out, for elderly moderate and middle income housing.
 - b. Reuse of the Nursery School site, if it becomes available, for elderly housing.
 - c. Consideration of a new policy toward second units for possible applicability in Belvedere, a policy which would allow second units under specific, well-defined conditions for the purpose of expanding the housing supply for moderate income households and/or the elderly.

Environmental Quality *

1. Views are to be preserved.
2. Open space is to be secured by a variety of means, including purchase, dedication of land, development rights, view easements or view corridors.
3. Encroachment on open water should be consistent with public purposes.
4. The scenic qualities of major circulation routes within the city should be enhanced.
5. All public and private actions that significantly affect the quality of the environment will be reviewed in accordance with the unique characteristics of each proposed action and each potential location under the specific mandatory procedures adopted.
6. Areas prone to geologic hazards should be closely regulated; field investigation of hazard prior to development should be required; and the city

* See also p. 37, Note.

should accept dedication of land as open space for safety reasons.

7. A launching access for small boats, for residents should be created.
8. As an addition to open space acquisition tools, the city should consider the creation of a Belvedere Land Trust, in which the city could acquire and hold title to land, easements, and development rights.
9. Opportunities to provide additional recreational facilities in Belvedere, such as reuse of the Belvedere School as a recreation oriented community center (if school use is phased out), should be explored.

Community Safety

1. To improve the information base for seismic safety and slope stability, Belvedere is participating in the geologic study planned for the southeast part of Marin County and scheduled for 1975.
2. To more accurately determine the effect of tsunamis on Belvedere, the city should promote and encourage a testing on the Corps of Engineers' model of San Francisco Bay. If the need is indicated, an evacuation plan should then be developed and published.
3. To reduce structural hazards (following the County study):
 - a. Inspection and evaluation criteria for evaluation of existing structures should be developed; and,
 - b. In identified risk areas, a requirement for geologic studies and appropriate engineering prior to building or major remodeling should be incorporated into the building code.
4. To reduce fire hazards:
 - a. The city's program of systematic downlot and Eucalyptus cleanup should be stepped up.

- b. The Planning Commission, with the building inspector and fire chief, should periodically review the building code to ensure maximum reasonable fire hazard protection.
5. To assure fire and police vehicular access in places where 10' road width is critical, parking space limits should be painted on all Corinthian and Belvedere islands' streets, and cars cited which overhand those limits.
6. Following the safety study, an information program should be undertaken to tell residents about potential hazards and measures that can be taken to alleviate them.

Noise

1. If the community response indicators change, the Planning Commission should re-evaluate the need for noise regulatory measures within the city.
2. As part of the Richardson Bay Residential Review Board, Belvedere should promote regulation of construction noise where environmental impact of noise will exceed protection limits.

Note: The 1970 Open Space Plan, including specific plans for Main Park, Cove Beach, Lagoon Road Park, Tiburon Blvd., San Rafael Ave. and Beach Rd., have been incorporated by reference into the General Plan.

APPENDIX A*

Second units, commonly called mother-in-law apartments, have been identified in the General Plan as a topic for discussion by the Planning Commission following adoption of the Plan. The purpose of this appendix is to provide some perspective for the discussion, outline a proposal for a second units ordinance permitting them under specified conditions for public purposes, and identify some of the hard questions that will need to be answered in determining whether for Belvedere the social benefits of such a proposal exceed the social costs.

Current city policy toward second units is to deny them if proposed, to abate them if discovered in existence. It is a policy which evolved along with several others during the city's 1972-1973 revision of the zoning ordinance in response to concerns about overbuilding--excessive density and/or excessive bulk, and in recognition of the city's needs to discourage increases in traffic and to regulate parking.

Although this public policy is well defined and recent, several reasons for reexamining it emerged during the preparation of the Housing Element:

1. Second units do exist in Belvedere. How many there are is difficult to determine since they are easily concealed in attics or basements or the former servants quarters, and owners, for obvious reasons, are reluctant to talk about them. A recent estimate, made by a resident familiar with local housing is that there may be about 35.

The creation and maintenance of non-conforming second units is part of a general trend in Marin County. In many Marin cities, there is a startling discrepancy between the number of units authorized by building permits and the higher number of units counted in the census. In large part, the difference is accounted for by second units. Most Marin cities have, like Belvedere, a policy to abate them when discovered. Policing them out of existence, however, depends of the cooperation of residents; and in most of these communities there seems to be a tacit agreement among residents not to report such units.

* Included as reference for future discussion, is not to be adopted as part of the General Plan at this time.

2. Under current economic conditions, second units are likely to proliferate. The housing shortage and good location provide strong market incentives for people to create them, and the prospect of some rent to help defray increasing property taxes, utility and housing maintenance costs provides the financial incentive.

3. Second units created outside legal procedures may be substandard and present life and safety hazards to occupants and neighbors.

4. If ways can be found to minimize social costs of increases in density and traffic, legalizing second units presents a readily apparent opportunity for meeting some of the city's housing needs in the immediate future and on a continuing basis. Few such implementation devices are available to the city, since it is mostly built up and has land uses determined. The only other apparent device, the reuse of land for moderate income or elderly housing, (two such sites have been identified in the Housing Element) is both long range and depends on future contingencies. Both devices could be useful.

Whatever the second unit policy is, it must take into account these factors. Maintaining current policy--no second units under any conditions in single family zones--will require more vigorous enforcement than in the past, including cooperation of the residents, in order to be effective. If the decision is to legalize second units, both the ordinance and its implementation will need to ensure a favorable exchange of social benefits: cost relief for Belvedere residents in need, more moderate income housing, and city control over the quality, size and occupancy for the social costs: increases in residential density and traffic.

Framework

The following outline for a second unit ordinance will provide a basis for discussion of this issue:

Second units be legalized in single family residential zones by conditional use permit procedures. Use permit procedure is the logical vehicle because it adapts to regulation of number and types of units allowed in an area.

These basic conditions would apply:

1. Application of building, housing and zoning code standards, exceptions to be granted by variance procedures;

2. Limitation of size of unit to 700 sq. ft. and number of occupants to two.

3. Favorable assessment of adequacy of utilities, access, and protection of privacy of adjoining lots.

In addition, the applicant could have to show the second unit will help achieve a city housing goal such as:

4. Expand the supply of moderate income housing. Applicant would need to agree to limit the rental charges and rent to a moderate income person or couple.

5. Provide relief for moderate income households, especially elderly, whose tax increases and housing payments are making their housing costs disproportionate to their income to the point of hardship. Applicant would need to show a housing cost vs. income of 30% or more.

6. Enable rehabilitation of a deteriorating house in cases in which the owner-occupant cannot afford rehabilitation without second unit income. Applicant would need to show that housing costs after rehabilitation will exceed 30% of income and are a hardship.

These procedures for implementation would be needed:

7. Imposition of a contract between the city and the owner limiting rental charges.

8. Requirement that tenant submit notarized statement indicating income meets city standard for moderate income.

9. Exemption from rental price-tenant income provisions for resident moderate income households and households showing hardship housing costs.

Questions

1. A realistic estimate of the number of units likely to be created or legalized under each provision of the ordinance will be key to assessing the social cost of density and traffic increases. How many units are likely to be created to expand moderate income housing supply? to provide

cost relief for moderate income households? to enable rehabilitation of a deteriorating house? Are numerical limits desirable? legal?

2. What impact would these numbers of units have on circulation and parking? What measures can be taken to alleviate the impact?

3. One concern that has been expressed is that there may be undesirable long range implications of legalizing second units, in particular how can the city ensure the intent of the ordinance can be carried out when a property that has a second unit changes hands or when the condition under which an exemption from rental-income provisions ceases to exist? Is there a legal mechanism that can be used?

4. What administration would be needed? Costs?

5. How would property values be affected? Assessments?

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